

Your business is on
the cutting edge.

Is your future



The Career
Connection •

*Linking Business with Education
for Oklahoma's Success*

“Coming from a family of business owners, I have a special commitment to business involvement in the educational system and the community as a whole. As Miss America 1996, I traveled the country speaking on bridging the gap between education and employment and preparing our students for high-tech, highly competitive jobs of the future. This bridge is called School-to-Work.



For employers, School-to-Work offers a cost-effective way to strengthen the pool of high-quality workers within communities. Businesses have direct input into school curriculum, so it reflects the skills and credentials students will need in the workplace. By making the workplace a learning environment for students, businesses will also gain the inside track to recruiting motivated, educated employees who are productive from day one.

Employers who want to discover how School-to-Work can help their business should glance at the list of employers already participating. These include Hilti Inc., the Tulsa Chamber of Commerce, Crown Auto World, Hillcrest Health System, Oklahoma Federal Credit Union, Durant Bank & Trust Co., National Bank of Commerce, Medical Center of Southeast Oklahoma, Bar S Foods and many more.

I will continue sharing the message of School-to-Work. I firmly believe that business must play a larger role in the education system. Technology in the workplace is creating some of our most pressing challenges. I urge my fellow Oklahomans to pay immediate attention to these challenges in order to ensure our students maintain a competitive edge in the 21st century workplace.

Shawntel Smith

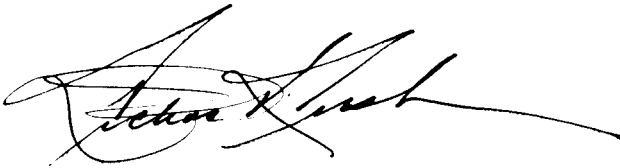
Your success and Oklahoma's continued economic growth depend in large part on the availability of an educated, skilled workforce.

Thousands of businesses across the country are already taking advantage of the School-to-Work system. They are providing career opportunities for our nation's youth — resulting in dedicated, loyal and skilled employees. The State Chamber encourages Oklahoma's businesses to get involved. Experience the benefits School-to-Work can provide your company. Determine how your company can invest in the future of Oklahoma.

Find out how you can take advantage of School-to-Work in your community. You can help develop a local program that creates challenging career opportunities for local young people. As students graduate from our learning institutions, they'll need a job. We want them to stay right here. We want your business to stay here too . . . and to grow.

Read further to learn how you can make School-to-Work happen.

Sincerely,



*Richard P. Rush
President & CEO
The State Chamber*



Taking Responsibility: Business Has a Role in 21st Century Education

A general job description for entry-level workers in the 21st century may read—“Needed: Effective communicator, creative problem-solver with career focus, high-tech skills, teamwork orientation and desire to achieve.”

Like most employers, you may have already experienced difficulties in finding the workforce you need to stay competitive. Unless students can learn essential, hands-on lessons about work while still in school, your job of hiring good employees will likely get harder in the future.

The challenge is here for companies to help develop the very workforce that their competitive marketplace demands. School-to-Work meets this challenge. It gives students the academic and workplace experience they need to step into complex jobs with greater confidence and maturity.

School-to-Work is the career connection that helps young people understand why they are in school and makes a career a real, attainable goal—not just a dream. It gives many students hope where none existed before. And it prepares every student for higher education, better jobs and more fulfilling lives.



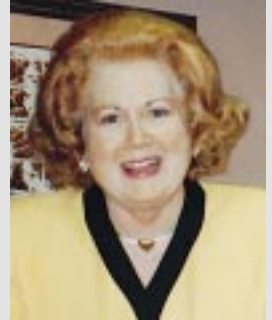
One student joined us in the summer of his junior year and has stayed with us through college. He is a loan officer now. There is another student that is currently in bookkeeping. At first she was shy, but now she has worked through it

and is outgoing and asks many intelligent questions. This student was third-generation welfare and I think, through School-to-Work, we broke the chain.

William Fahrendorf

Graduating from Classrooms to Careers:
People Power for Oklahoma Businesses

- ▶ According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the composition of the workforce is changing dramatically. By the time today's high school freshmen graduate, an overwhelming majority of all jobs — 85 percent, in fact — will require either technical or professional skills.
- ▶ Where will they get these skills? If the current trend continues, the answer is — on the job and at their employer's expense.
- ▶ Business is spending enormous amounts of money on training and recruiting — billions of dollars per year— often to fill entry-level positions. Business investment in new hires likely will increase as the job requirements become more technology-driven.
- ▶ School-to-Work is a valid, workable answer to the shortage of well-trained workers. It rounds out rigorous academic education with experience — resulting in a better prepared, more productive workforce. That means your business — and our state — gains an edge on the competition here at home, across the nation and throughout the world.



The Youth Apprenticeship Program is a School-to-Work opportunity that not only provides students with a window into the actual workings of a credit union but also allows them to learn basic skills in a mentoring environment. And it increases our employee job-pool. We have already hired two former apprentices. We are committed to this program. Without exception, the feedback from parents and student apprentices has been positive.

Shirley R. McConnell
President/CEO
Oklahoma Federal Credit
Union
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Raising Expectations: School-to-Work Brings Lessons to Life

School-to-Work introduces students of all ages to the wide array of career choices available to them. It also encourages students to consider continuing education options they may otherwise have overlooked.

Students learn by seeing and doing — the best teachers already know this. That's why business people visiting classrooms, classes touring work facilities, and students experiencing on-the-job responsibilities are important activities — all give young people valuable insights into their futures and help them make better educational choices.

In the classroom or at the work site, this career connection helps students understand how academics relate to the real world. As a result, students focus more on their studies. Class work reinforces real-world skills such as communicating, calculating and cooperating.

School-to-Work raises the expectations of all students by showing them what is possible and challenging them to achieve it. Every student can benefit by learning skills they can apply to any career.



We have a medium-size company with about 500 employees. Our School-to-Work initiative started with Altus High School in the past year. I have been intricately involved in the partnership because my own children are now involved with School-to-Work. I am a firm believer in the initiative. The students we employ are very motivat-

ed. We give them a tour of Bar S Foods and provide a brief orientation. They are treated the same as other employees. Hopefully, through their motivation and enthusiasm, they will help others become involved.

John Liegl

Getting Involved: Your Options for Working with Oklahoma's Career Connection

There are as many effective ways to get involved with School-to-Work as there are good reasons to participate.

You can custom-fit your company's involvement to match your business interests, resources and employee or community needs. Some companies choose to follow models that have proven successful elsewhere. Others pioneer their own programs designed to meet their specific needs.

For most companies, the decision to participate is usually based on a number of factors: a desire to create a pool of skilled young workers, concern for the economic future of young people in the community, interest in being a good community citizen, the need to decrease escalating training costs, or the desire to gain a competitive foothold in the marketplace with well-educated, highly motivated, technically proficient young people.

Regardless of the specific goals of your business, one result is practically guaranteed—new graduates ready and qualified to become your new employees.



I would strongly encourage other businesses to join School-to-Work. We are molding and shaping our own employees, which is the most beneficial thing we can do for our company because it creates a loyal and productive workforce. The ethics that a lot of students across the country have these days are not what they used to be. So, if you can train these students now, you can get the best from them and show them what life is like when they work hard and like what they do for a living.

Sandy Nickles
National Bank of Commerce

The Career Connection: Linking Business with Education for Oklahoma's Success



School-Based

School-Based. Oklahoma City Zoo director Steve Wylie points out marine life in the zoo's aquariums to Millwood fifth-graders Mayjor Connelly, April Portis and Sade Roberts. Marine biology is just one of nine intern positions the zoo offers to Millwood High School students in its new School-to-Work partnership. Wylie says, "School-to-Work is a proactive approach that gives direction to future zoo employees as they decide on courses to take or the level of education they need to qualify. Most zookeepers have college degrees, with many majoring in wildlife management or zoology. And that is just one career option in an industry that offers scores of others."

Work-Based



Connecting. Amy Loshe, public relations director for Stan Clark, Inc., the company that owns Eskimo Joe's Restaurant and Joe's Clothes based in Stillwater, Okla., helps Perkins-Tryon junior high school students understand how to create a marketing plan for a new school-based T-shirt business. Margaret Gibson, the seventh- and eighth-grade math and careers teacher from Perkins-Tryon, asked Loshe to show her students how marketing works in the real work world. Gibson's class is benefiting from her summer work experience with Ditch Witch, an international manufacturing company, which she said has given her a "new mindset" for classroom teaching methods. Her own work experience served as a catalyst to involve business people from the Perkins area. Local business owners have been helping the students to develop job descriptions, write job applications and conduct interviews for the school-based business. Gibson believes that involvement from business professionals makes classwork



Connecting

Work-Based. Kevin Cockerham, left, and mentor Bobby Bruner, systems application engineer for Johnson Control, Inc., set the timing on new heating and air conditioning systems at the University of Central Oklahoma. Cockerham, a senior honors student at Little Axe High School, will complete the same 120 hours of prerequisite training required of all company engineers. Johnson Control employs Cockerham part time and will pay for his advanced collegiate education. Cockerham is combining his training at Johnson Control with skills acquired in the computer software programming, electricity and electronics courses at Moore-Norman Area

Vo-Tech School. "Although high school courses like physics have helped me understand deductive reasoning, most of the stuff I learn about state-of-the-art equipment

Benefits

Using the Career Connection: How It Works for You

- ▶ Employers gain a more highly skilled, entry-level workforce as they help design and implement work-based experiences.
- ▶ Work knowledge creates a more highly skilled, future workforce — whose training you have helped design and implement.
- ▶ Students become employees who are quick studies and problem-solvers — able to adapt to change and new challenges.
- ▶ Students learn technical, academic and communications skills as well as important job skills, such as strong work ethics and teamwork.
- ▶ On-site interaction gives employers an opportunity to evaluate potential future employees in a work setting prior to hiring — expanding the pool of qualified candidates and reducing employee turnover.
- ▶ Teachers have an opportunity to see firsthand what skills the workplace requires — and translate classroom activities into on-the-job applications.
- ▶ Employee mentors are invigorated and motivated by helping young people understand the workplace and giving them valuable experience.
- ▶ A stronger, productive workforce will attract new business and industry to Oklahoma.

Making a Difference: Help Students Explore Their Opportunities

Field trips and internships make a difference. Oklahoma's top employers, including agriculture, oil and gas, healthcare, aviation, and telecommunications industries are important sites for School-to-Work initiatives. But mid-size and small businesses are equally vital — students need to explore a wide range of opportunities that fit their individual talents and career ambitions.

Your business has a lot of experience to offer, whether it's hosting a plant tour for middle schoolers or introducing a high school junior to the operation of a fast-paced office during the school year. You determine your company's level of involvement. Here are ways you can be involved:

- ▶ Recruit employee mentors to help students “learn the ropes.”
- ▶ Offer staff experts to act as special project consultants.
- ▶ Arrange job shadowing for students to observe employees at work.
- ▶ Provide internships in a variety of departments.
- ▶ Participate in the development of classroom curricula.
- ▶ Visit classrooms as a guest speaker or teacher. Talk about your educational and career background.
- ▶ Inform school teachers about your industry and job needs. Let them do summer internships in your workplace, so students can be taught how classroom learning is applied in the workforce.
- ▶ Host field trips or tours for school groups.
- ▶ Implement a paid apprentice program.

Because School-to-Work includes school students of all ages, you may want to create a program with activities appropriate for students of various age groups — or you may decide to develop a single program focusing on one age group. It's a great opportunity to put your best business ideas to work for the future.



I am from a medium-sized company with approximately 350 employees. The students we employ are hard-working and dedicated. I would tell other businesses that it would be productive and wise for their industry to get involved with a School-to-Work initiative because they receive bright, motivated young people who remain loyal to the company and who work diligently and well.

Linda Herriage
Medical Center of Southeast
Oklahoma
Durant, Oklahoma

expectations

Investing in the Future: Improve Your Business
Through Oklahoma's Career Connection

Advancing technology. Demand for high-skilled workers. Fierce competition in the international marketplace. Today, many high school and college graduates are not fully prepared to face the realities of the world of work.

School-to-Work actively prepares and motivates students to succeed in the type of jobs the future workplace will demand. It broadens students' career and educational choices, enabling them to make informed decisions about which options to pursue — including continuing their education. And it helps prepare young people to make the transition needed to become tomorrow's employees and executives.

But School-to-Work can only be as effective as employers — working in collaboration with educators — make it. Your involvement is essential. The success of a new generation of workers depends on it. So does the success of your business. Find out how your company can contribute, and make a commitment to keeping America strong and proud.



“The pendulum is about to swing toward a more
common-sense and *balanced* view
of education. And I believe you
are the
very people who will **change**
the direction of education in this country.

Jack Smith

Q. How much will it cost my company?

A. Your financial contribution depends on your company's level of participation. For example, visiting a classroom as a career resource is an investment of time. If you become involved in activities like job shadowing or paid work experience, your investment will vary. Costs for these activities will be offset by reduced costs for recruiting, screening and initial training for your employees.

Q. Will I choose the students placed in my company?

A. Yes. While all students will have the opportunity to participate in Oklahoma's School-to-Work system, the students that you work with will be selected using a process you develop with teachers, counselors and other partners.

Q. How much paperwork will my employees have to do?

A. If you place students in your workplace part time, front-line employees and mid-level supervisors will need to participate in student evaluations. If you offer short summer internships or job shadowing days, little paperwork is required.

Q. Who is ultimately in charge of the initiative?

A. Responsibility for coordinating local efforts belongs to local partners — employers, educators, parents, students, School-to-Work coordinators and others. Local community-based School-to-Work partnerships will decide what types of activities are most beneficial for the students and businesses within each community.



Health Academy 2000 and Oklahoma's School-to-Work initiative is a unique opportunity to work in conjunction with local school systems and impact students. As a businessperson, I've become more knowledgeable about the special challenges of today's teachers. And I think educators are learning more about the skills that are critical for students to have to function in today's workplace. It's a two-way street.

Jenny Auger-Maw

Chairperson
Health Academy 2000
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Preparing for the Future: School-to-Work Is the Next Step

I got involved in School-to-Work because it works for my business. Compared to the astronomic costs of hiring new people and high turnover, this program is an investment that comes back. Why? Because it builds good employees. When you help someone get an education, be productive and make money — well, that creates a worker who is company-oriented, career-focused and loyal.



Five years ago, it became evident that several of my best employees had obtained practical work experience while they were in school. Today, Crown Auto World is actively involved in School-to-Work and recruits new technicians from the program. The students we work with learn more about the business world, and our seasoned employees get tremendous satisfaction from sharing their expertise and experience. The camaraderie is great.

I believe business has a responsibility to prepare young people for a future where it is still possible to reach personal goals and achieve success. School-to-Work is an opportunity for business people to contribute to a student's education — and develop a good employee and citizen. It's a step into the future. I encourage you to take part and take Oklahoma into the 21st century with a skilled workforce that can lead the world.

Henry Primeaux

President and CEO
Crown Auto World
Tulsa, Oklahoma

For more information about School-to-Work, call:

Oklahoma's Career Connection

1-800-258-LEARN

or write:

Business Council on Education

330 Northeast 10th Street



THE STATE CHAMBER
OKLAHOMA'S ASSOCIATION OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY